

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

(IN FORMAT COMPLIANT WITH THE REVISED 37 CFR 1.121)

Please cancel claim 10 without prejudice. Please add new claims 28-30.

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An apparatus comprising:

an interface connectable to a network, said interface configured to transmit information via a frame in said network, said frame comprising a packet envelope carrying a plurality of packets, wherein a first of said packets has (i) one or more labels configured to control routing of said first packet through said network, (ii) a link layer address following said labels, (iii) and a payload to carry said information and (iv) a data identification portion having a plurality of bits (a) preceding said labels and  
(b) configured to identify a data type of said information.

2. (CANCELED)

3. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said network comprises one of a Synchronous Optical Network and a Synchronous Digital Hierarchy fiber optic network.

4. (CANCELED)

5. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said one or more labels comprise Multi-Protocol Label Switching labels.

6. (CANCELED)

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said packets further comprises:

a Simple Data Link ~~packet with~~ framing field;

an error checking field for said Simple Data Link framing

5 field; and

a payload header configured to store configuration information to identify one of a plurality of protocols used in said packet.

8. (CANCELED)

9. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said link layer address comprises a destination address and a source address.

10. (CANCELED)

11. (CANCELED)

12. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said first packet further comprises an error portion configured to determine a data error.

13. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said network comprises a plurality of nodes configured to address said one or more labels.

14. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The apparatus according to claim 13, wherein each of said nodes comprise de-framing hardware configured to read said one or more labels from said first frame.

15. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The apparatus according to claim 14, wherein each of said plurality of nodes is configured to transport said first frame in response to said one or more labels.

16. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) An apparatus comprising:

one or more nodes configured to transfer one or more frames on a network, each of said frames comprising a packet envelope carrying a plurality of packets, at least one of said packets having one or more labels configured to control switching

of said at least one packet by said one or more nodes, wherein a first of said packets has a first protocol and a second of said packets has a second protocol unrelated to said first protocol.

17. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for transmitting ~~one or more~~ a plurality of packets of data, comprising the steps of:

(A) transmitting a frame comprising a packet ~~envelop~~ envelope carrying said ~~one or more~~ packets, a first of said ~~one or more~~ packets having (i) a first protocol, (ii) comprising one or more labels and (iii) a payload and a second of said packets having a second protocol unrelated to said first protocol;

(B) controlling switching of said first packet in said frame through said network in response to said one or more labels;  
10 and

(C) switching said first packet to another network in response to said one or more labels.

18. (CANCELED)

19. (CANCELED)

20. (CANCELED)

21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein ~~a~~ said second of said packets is void of said labels.

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said first packet further comprises a network layer address following said link layer address.

23. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 17, wherein said one or more labels comprises Multi-Protocol Label Switching labels.

24. (CANCELED)

25. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of:

storing a path signal label in a Path Overhead section in a frame header of said frame to specify each type of said one or  
5 more packets within said packet envelope.

26. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 17, wherein ~~said first packet has a first protocol, a second of said one or more packets has a second protocol different than said first protocol and a third of said one or more packets has a third~~

5 protocol different than said first protocol and said second protocol.

27. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 17, wherein step (A) comprises the sub-steps of:

transmitting said one or more labels of said first packet; and

5 transmitting a link layer address of said first packet after transmitting said one or more labels.

28. (NEW) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said first packet has a first protocol and a second of said one or more packets has a second protocol unrelated to said first protocol.

29. (NEW) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said frame further comprises:

a frame header;

a Path Overhead section in said frame header; and

5 a path signal label in said Path Overhead section to specify each type of said one or more packets within said packet envelope.

30. (NEW) The apparatus according to claim 16, wherein each of said frames further comprises:

a frame header;

a Path Overhead section in said frame header; and

5 a path signal label in said Path Overhead section to specify each type of said one or more packets within said packet envelope.